NAQCC News

Jun 6, 2009	NAQCC Web Site	Issue #095_096

In this issue:

1. June Sprints
1a. May Sprint Results
2. June Challenges
3. General Club News
4. Featured Award of the Month
4a. Latest Award Winners
5. The NAQCC Elmer Project
6. CW Cartoon of the Month
7. News Items and Articles by Our Members

1. JUNE SPRINTS: Two sprints this month. Our regular monthly sprint will be this Wednesday, June 10th at the usual times of 0030-0230Z which turns out to be Tuesday evening for this part of the world. The special award for this sprint is for portable operation.

Then as our participation in World QRP Day on June 17 we'll have a special 1 hour QRPp sprint that evening which turns out to be June 18 0000-0100Z when converted to UTC.

As always, full details on our sprints can be found in the Contests/Sprints section of the club web site. Check there and read the rules completely before participating, especially the log submission rules. We get several logs each month that do not comply to standards and we (I) must take up a lot of time converting them to the format we need for our cross-checking procedures.

1a. MAY SPRINT RESULTS: A new record number of logs this month (65) containing some impressive results and one very close race. In the Eastern SWA division, N8BB with his w5gi mystery antenna at 50' beat out K3WWP and his attic random wire by just 4 points. K3WWP had 54 QSO's - 11 more than N8BB, but 4 fewer multipliers.

Here now are the full statistics clearly showing the great turnout we had. I was surprised and a little disappointed in 20M here at my QTH, but 40M was fantastic and 80M quite good also. Overall 20 and 40 were great, but 80 had the fewest QSO's since last August. 40 and 20 should be quite good for the next few months with the longer daylight hours:

STATS - current month, previous month, all time record, mo/yr (blue indicates a record set this month):

	May	Apr	Rec	Month
Logs -	65	64	65	5/09 &4/09
Autologger logs -	59	59	59	5/09
Stns in logs -	106	96	110	5/08
Hour 1 QSO's -	557	542	564	9/08
Hour 2 QSO's -	464	424	476	9/08
Total QSO's -	1021	967	1040	9/08
20M QSO's -	137	11	185	6/08
40M QSO's -	720	617	720	5/09
80M QSO's -	137	339	481	12/07

WINNERS:

1st SWA East - N8BB
1st SWA Central - W7JI
1st SWA Mountain - NO2D
1st SWA Pacific - WA6L
1st Gain - K4BAI

Special Award (first time entrants)
Drawing Entrants: N8BB, K9IS, VE5BCS
Drawing Winner: N8BB

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because that shows the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are important also.

We had 7 stations who didn't submit a log show up 6-10 times in the 65 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 7 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log. Remember submitting a log doubles the strength of your statement that you support CW operation.

We welcome these hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope they will continue to participate and report their results:
N8BB, VE3FUJ, WB1HJS, KA3NZR, K9IS, KT4FJ, NA7US, VE5BCS, KA1SAW, N6HE, W8BI

Full sprint info here.

2. JUNE CHALLENGES: We're again having our traditional Field Day challenge this year, and as usual to complement it, a month long challenge as well. It's the Call Sign Construction challenge designed by Mike KC2EGL originally a couple years ago. It's an alphabet type challenge with the 'words' being members' call signs.

We'll have the May challenge results in the next newsletter or you can simply check the Challenges section of the web site.

As you should do for every challenge, sprint, and award, read and understand the rules completely before you do anything. Here in the newsletters we just give a brief synopsis of what's going on.

Full Challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- We've been receiving a lot of good comments about the NAQCC, and since they apply not only to me, but to all officers and members, I want to share some here.

W4SEC says about our careful log checking procedures, "Hi John, Thanks for the correction. I pre set up a genlog file and save it with a bogus contact (can't save an empty file) and delete it at the end. I just forgot to correct the numbers..... Thanks for all of your efforts. 72, Pete"

N8XMS about our challenges, "Thanks to all the creative people who come up with these great challenges and who work so hard to make the NAQCC such an outstanding club! 73 Paul"

WY7N about the NAQCC in general, "Thanks again for putting together this club. I feel like a kid with my novice license again. It's more than fun. 73, Bruce"

N9IV about his suggestion for a new club award which we will be announcing shortly, "Thanks for your prompt response. I'll look forward to applying to be the number 0001 recipient of the award. I appreciate your listening to me. Russ"

N8XMS about the hidden callsign in the newsletter, "The hidden callsign in the newsletter is a great idea. It will be interesting to see how many people find their call. I had to read through the newsletter twice before I spotted the ******! To bad it wasn't mine :-) It's almost like doing a word-search puzzle. 73 Paul"

K8BP about the newsletter, "I always look forward towards reading the NAQCC Newsleter. Great job I must say.....Keep up the great work and have an enjoyable summer. Best 73' Clarke"

VE3FAL on various matters, "As usual another great newsletter... I have to admit that I am one of those members who lurks in the background, but lacks the operating time that I used to have years ago. That means "Times They R a Changing" I also offered my time when the ARS ran the special call, just as the NAQCC has done, but due to certain rules and regs that was not allowed.... Great group, great club, keep up the good work. Fred"

W1OH on our anniversary celebration in October, "....yes, I'm still on for the 5th anniversary operation! Keep me posted. And let's put in a request for excellent propagation for those 7 days in October!! 73, geoff"

To be fair, I should also report the negative comments here, however there aren't any to report. I guess we must be doing something right at the NAQCC in our efforts to preserve and protect CW and QRP.

- From Tom WY3H - For our observance of World QRP Day on June 17th we would like our members to make as many QRP QSO's as possible between 0000 and 2400Z. We will award a certificate to the one making the most QRP QSO's (1 to 5 watts) and the most QRPp QSO's (<1 watt). Any band and any antenna may be used - two way CW QSO's only, of course.

Report your results to **TJMITCHELLKX3@COMCAST.NET** before 2400Z on Sunday, June 21. Club officers not eligible for the certificates, but we hope they will participate and report also. Then at 2400Z on the 17th (0000Z on the 18th), we hope all will join in our mW sprint as mentioned above.

- - Our new autologger and membership application forms are working perfectly. Thanks again to Paul N4LCD and Jonathan W4QDB for providing these services for us.

- - Several members found the hidden call sign in the last newsletter, but unfortunately for him, not the member whose call it was - VA3YJC #1550, so the prize of 100 NAQCC QSL cards rolls over to this issue. Read everything in the newsletter carefully, and if you find YOUR call, let us know before the next newsletter is posted on June 26. Only the special hidden call counts, as there are many calls mentioned in each newsletter, of course. The hidden call is easy to identify, if not easy to find. It consists of a mix of upper and lower case letters and is in an obviously out of context place in a sentence. Thanks to Bill KB3XS, who came up with this great idea. Every member gets one, and only one chance to win. A member's call will only be used in one newsletter, then they are removed from any further consideration, whether they find their call and win or don't find it and miss out.

- - We've gotten a few more volunteers to help with our October 5th anniversary special event station operation. Very basically (see the last newsletter for more), we are looking for ops from each call area to operate N1A, N2A, N3A..... N0A during a week in October centered on our October sprint. We have volunteers from each call area with these exceptions - W2, W6, W8. If you are in those call areas and would like to help out, let us know as soon as possible. We are still taking volunteers from the other call areas also. We'll have a list of volunteers in the next newsletter.

- - The time frame for the recruitment award ends soon (June 30). The leader at the moment has just 4 recruits, so if you put in a modest effort before the end of the month, you could just be the winner of an ARRL Wire Antenna book donated by John K3WWP. A recruit only counts as yours if he puts your call in the 'Source' field of the membership application, so be sure to tell him to do that.

- - It's again very short notice, but Tom WY3H and John K3WWP will be attending the Breezeshooters Hamfest in Butler PA and setting up a NAQCC table on Sunday, June 7. Mike KC2EGL and Ethan W3IRS will also be there and we're sure some other club members as well. Tom will be monitoring 146.520 simplex. Search Breezeshooters Hamfest on the Internet for info if you're interested in coming.

4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: - This month it's the QSO-A-Day Award. This award was suggested by K4UK and is based on K3WWP's making at least one daily QRP/CW/simple wire antenna QSO for over 5,400 consecutive days dating back to Aug 5, 1994 and still continuing. You don't have to go to that extreme to earn the award though. All you need to do is make 1 or more QSO's a day for various periods of time ranging from 2 months to a full year. Or you can make 2 or more QSO's a day for shorter periods of 1 month or any 30 consecutive days spanning 2 months. And you don't even have to use a simple wire antenna for every QSO like John does, although your QSO's must be CW/QRP of course. Any kind of QSO is acceptable with two exceptions. A regular sked with a station designed to keep the streak alive and a regular net check-in QSO do not count. As always, read and be familiar with the complete rules before embarking on earning this or any award.

Full NAQCC Awards info here.

4a. AWARD WINNERS THE PAST TWO MONTHS:

WA9KPI - 1000MPW # 0054
K2QPN - 1000MPW # 0055
K7HV - 1000MPW # 0056
VE6RI - 1000MPW # 0057
NU7T - 30-30 # 0007 (one month: April 2009)
N8XMS - AlphaPrefix USA # 0007
K2QPN - DXCC # 0004

With the Suffix Award he earned in December, Paul N8XMS is now the second winner of a K1/K2 custom knob donated by Gregg WB8LZG. Paul has a K1 rig, and should be receiving the knob about the time this newsletter is posted. NU7T was our first winner.

If you're not familiar with the knob giveaway despite the complete description on both the giveaway and awards pages on the web site, here is a brief synopsis. Gregg WB8LZG has donated a set of beautiful knob inserts for the K1 and K2 rigs. The Giveaways page in the main section of the web site has a picture. You can win one by earning and applying for any TWO of the following NAQCC awards.

QSO-A-DAY
30-30
Alphabet Prefix
Worked Members - Advanced
Suffix Words

Only new applicants on or after October 1, 2008 are eligible.

Full List of all award winners here.

5. ELMER PROJECT: From Karl N3IJR - Hello from the QRS net and NAQCC Elmer Project. The QRS net is well under way now and we have had Seven Net nights so far. We have had 20 check In's and it has been a lot of fun. We are now meeting on 7.122.5 MHZ on Sunday evenings at 8:30 PM EST and even with band conditions not being the best Net Control has been able to dig out those QRP signals. Just wanted to say a word about checking in, DO NOT be afraid to check in! It really is easy. Listen for N3AQC/NAQCC QRS NET QRZ K and send your call Net Control will pick you up and we will exchange RST and name. Then net control will ask you to PSE AS (please stand by) and then we will try to see if anyone else is out there. Then net control will go back through the call up list and look for comments. It is great CW practice and lots of fun. If net control is sending to fast ask me to slow down, we are here to learn together. I wanted to thank our club President Tom, he is our back up for net control. I also must thank KC2NRQ/Jay for being faithful to all of the nets so far. So please join us on Sunday evenings even if you have this code thing down pat, we all need the practice and help. 73 Karl/ N3IJR net control

If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**
N3IJR - pix, email, n3ijr (1K)

Also see Elmer Project on the web site.

6. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH: Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS: This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Jun 25. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** It was a lot of fun operating the Hoot Owl Sprint from Tom WY3H's QTH. We set up in a tent outside his trailer. He used his HW-8 and I used his HW-9.

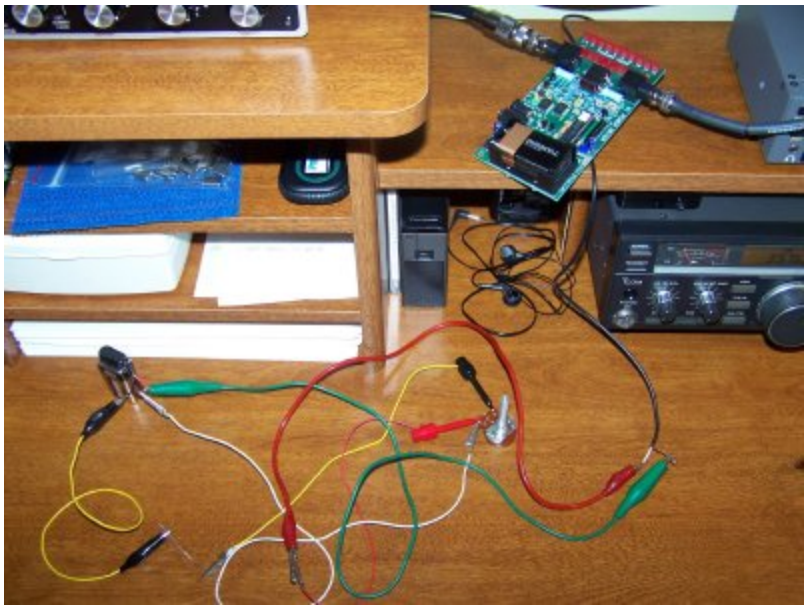
For antennas we simply clipped into his two random wire antennas. He took 80M and I took 40M. There was not a lot of activity heard on either band and we didn't make all that many QSO's. However the fun came in doing the setting up and fellowshipping with Tom while waiting for contacts to come along. Tom's twin sons Ethan (W3IRS) and Ariel were a big help in assisting me in setting up the tent. It was a very cold evening with the temperature bottoming out the following morning very close to an all-time low for June of 36 degrees. So we only operated an hour and 45 minutes, then went inside to warm up before we tore down the setup.

Here are some pictures of Tom setting up the equipment in the tent, Tom operating the HW-8 and me operating the HW-9.

- **From Paul N8XMS #675 -** I knew that the 4-band part of the May challenge would be the most difficult part for me to complete because my Elecraft K1 only covers 40, 30, 20, and 15 meters, and I hadn't heard anything on 15 meters for several months. I started by spending a lot of time monitoring 15 and having my keyer call automatic CQs while I did other things around the shack. With no luck after about three weeks I decided that a "desperate situation called for desperate action." I don't have a QRP rig for 80 meters nor do I have an antenna for that band, but I thought that I would give it a try with my old ICOM 725.

I hooked the 725 up to my Cushcraft R7 vertical through a tuner that has a fairly wide matching range and turned the power down as far as it would go. I was easily able to make a contact with WD8Q in OH but a check with a watt meter showed that the lowest power that I could set the rig to was 8 watts - not quite QRP. I double checked with John, K3WWP, to see if the QSO would qualify and he confirmed my suspicions that it would not.

After doing a little bit of internet and email list research I came across a clever idea to get that power down. It turns out that a small negative bias voltage applied to the ALC jack on the Icom will trick it into decreasing its output power. (The ALC jack is normally used with amplifiers to prevent overdriving of the amp.) I grabbed a 9-volt battery, a potentiometer, some resistors, and alligator-clip test leads and threw together a simple voltage dividing circuit to bias the 725s ALC. It looked like a rats-nest but it worked! I got the power down to about 4 watts and answered a CQ from WA2TDL in NY. It turns out that he was running QRP as well. Conditions were not too good but we were able to exchange all of the vitals and complete a QSO - and I had my 4th band!

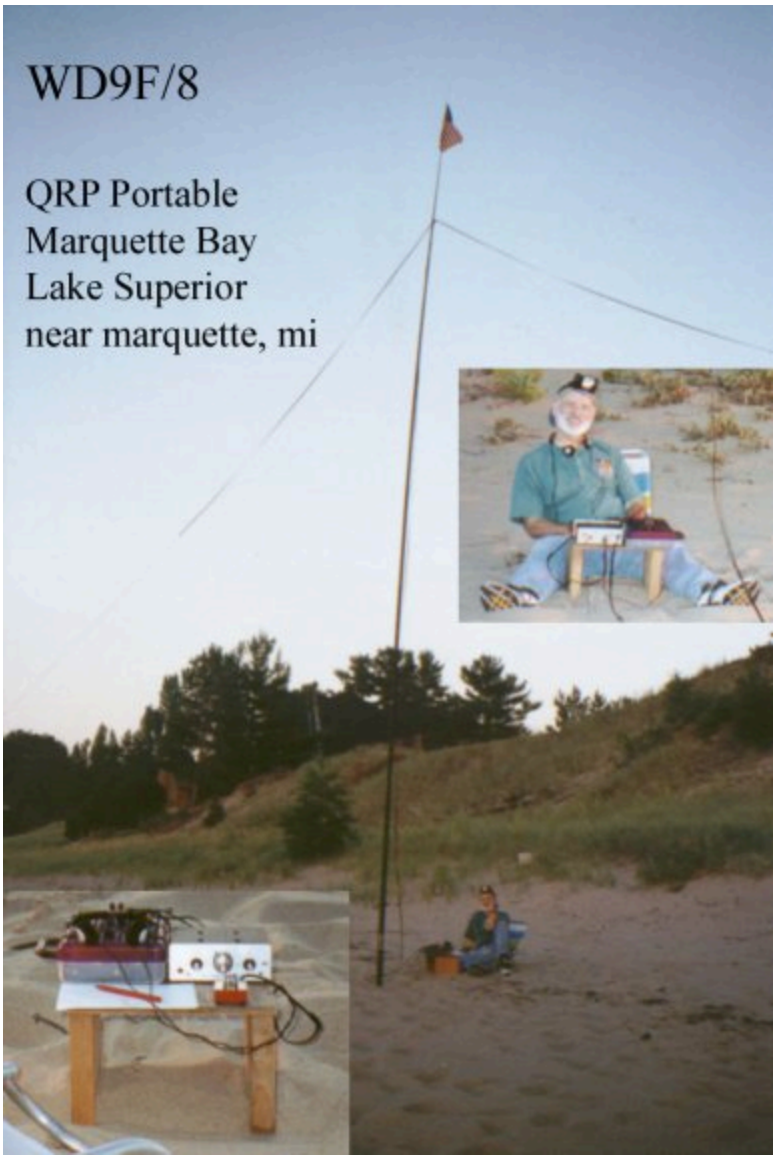


- **From Woody WD9F #1648 -** One of my best QRPexpeditions was my Portable CW QRP operaton from Marquette Bay (U.S. "Northern Coast" / Lake Superior / Michigan's U.P.) in 2004. For those of you who aren't familiar with Michigan's upper peninsula, go there! It's some of the most beautiful country with the most beautiful beaches in the world. I had unusually hot but good weather & band conditions were awesome. I operated four hours in what I had advertised on various lists as a "Work Woody Sprint".

I Used my DK9SQ push up tower, a folded 20 meter dipole (abt. 30 feet), my MFJ 9020 (5W), my MK-44 paddles and a homebrew battery pack. I set up right on the beach. The darn mosquitoes were fierce as the air was very still and muggy (very unusual for that area). I had to recess a few times to re-dose myself with insect repellant. I was grateful to so many who had gone out of their way to try to work me. I was astonished to hear KG4FXG (Bill) calling me when I came up on frequency! Bill was my first contact and he called me! (Those Kentucky/Georgia NTS guys are hard to beat!). WA9AQN (John), NC9T (Dan) & NS9F (Gene) were close behind representing 9RN/ILN. I worked a total of 27 stations including UA9CK/Anatoly, JH2QLC/Shiba & HA5KF/Fred.

It took me about two weeks to get a special photo QSL made and out to all I worked. I was

very appreciative to all for providing me with a great time on the beach! I learned that posting exact operating times / dates and frequency on the QRP-L and other places really pays off. I also learned how to manage a small pile up. Great fun. Portable QRP is just awesome!



The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.